fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) (for floods) to Himachal Pradesh during 1996-97 to 1998-1999 is indicated below:—

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Funds allocated under CRF	Assistance released under NFCR (for floods)
1996-97	26.95	10.56
1997-98	28.44	24.80
1998-99	29.89	

Horticulture in Maharashtra

900. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are formulating a programme to encourage horticulture and train farmers in the trade in Maharashtra State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount proposed to be allocated during year 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 to each district separately for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commmerce during 1998-99 had initiated a programme for Integrated Training for Horticulture Producers for the production of quality and disease free produce for export. Primarily, two varieties of mangoes i.e., Alfanso and Kesar from Ratnagiri and Aurangabad areas were selected for this programme. The programme is being continued in the current year with aim to provide training in pre-harvest, harvest and post-harvest management activities which includes selection of orchards, pesticide residue management, integrated water management,

nutrient management, pest and disease management, fertilizer management, storage, grading and packaging and transportation.

(c) Budget for training programmes in Maharashtra is estimated at Rs. 10.80 lakhs. This, however, can be revised depending upon needs projected by the State Government/Industry. No specific district-wise allocations have been made.

New Loaning Policy for Himachal Pradesh Farmers

901. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to improve the refinance facility to the poor farmers of Himachal Pradesh for their crop production;

(b) whether Government are contemplating a new loaning policy for the Himachal Pradesh farmers;

(c) if so, when it is likely to be extended; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Steps taken to improve the refinance facility to the poor farmers of Himachal Pradesh for their crop production are as under:—

(i) Several refinements in the existing crop loan system based on the recommendations of "committee on crop loan system" have been made. These are:

— Preparation of Normal Credit Limit (NCL) statements by cooperatives once in three years with annual updation;

— Broad-basing the technical committee for fixing scales of finance and flexibility in the proportion of cash and kind components;

— Disbursement of kind component in cash;

— Fixing scales of finance separately for Hi-tech and Horticulture crop;

— Financing crop-loan under cash credit system;